Sri Lanka: Families return to their villages

Notleidende Minderheit in Sri Lanka (Foto: NAC Canada)

Zurich. “We are grateful for any kind of support, both spiritual and humanitarian.” It is with these words that District Apostle Helper John Sobottka writes to Chief Apostle Wilhelm Leber as he describes the situation of the New Apostolic congregations in the north of Sri Lanka. In the meantime, help has arrived for those New Apostolic families who have returned to their destroyed villages after the civil war. These families, who are part of the country’s Tamil minority, have survived for years under terrible living conditions. And now they find themselves left with nothing.

In the meantime, Chief Apostle Wilhelm Leber has engaged the help of the aid organisation “NAK-karitativ”, which has taken up contact with potential donors, partner organisations at work in the crisis region, and the New Apostolic Church Canada.

Four areas of action

The acute crisis situation in Northern Sri Lanka can be categorised into four action areas: at the top of the list is providing emergency foodstuffs and seed, clothing, and household items to satisfy the immediate needs. Following that, the affected families are to receive reconstruction aid so that they can rebuild their lives. Infrastructure aid is also planned in the area of well-drilling and sanitation facilities. Finally, aid will also be provided for the creation of a church infrastructure.

Based on the assessments of “NAK-karitativ”, the first three areas will be covered financially by the Church’s aid organisations. The Project Coordinator of the New Apostolic Church’s aid organisation will meet with representatives from the New

Apostolic Church Canada, project representatives from Sri Lanka, and international aid agencies at work locally in the former civil war region in order to monitor the project and consult with them on issues concerning logistics, procurement, and implementation.

Aid has arrived

“NAK-karitativ” has already made available 15,000 Euros of immediate emergency aid from its reserves. Estimates for reconstruction and resettlement projects range between 80,000 and 120,000 Euros. The New Apostolic Church International has already pledged 20,000 US dollars, and the charitable institution of the New Apostolic Church Switzerland has committed 15,000 Euros for humanitarian projects in the region. In addition, the missionary charity of the New Apostolic Church Switzerland has also promised 10,000 Euros for Church relief efforts. Since it is estimated that a further 300 New Apostolic Christians will shortly be released from internment and transitional camps, it is assumed that further donations will be needed.

“NAK-karitativ” is asking for donations under the keyword “Sri Lanka 2011”, and has published the Donation account information on its website.

25 May 2011